



THE ARCHBISHOP
OF YORK

Fifteen people with varied stories of God's call to serve will be ordained Deacon by the Archbishop of York, Stephen Cottrell, in York Minster on Saturday 29th June 2024 in a service beginning at 2.30pm. The preacher will be the Revd Dr Helen Dawes, Principal of Westcott House theological college, Cambridge.

The service will be livestreamed on the internet via www.yorkminster.org.

Deacons are called to work in the community and assist in church; each candidate will serve as Assistant Curate in a parish within the Diocese of York, the Church of England between the Rivers Humber and Tees and between the A1 and the Yorkshire coast.

The fifteen are aged from 24 to 74, and will continue their training in service alongside an experienced priest; some will be ordained priest themselves in the future.

Archbishop Stephen said, "it's a great encouragement that God gets heard by so many different people in so many different ways and at such different stages in their life. I've really enjoyed meeting each of the candidates and hearing their different stories and how they have committed themselves to serving Jesus through his church.

"Deacons are heralds of the gospel and servants of those they meet and whose lives they touch; I'll be praying for them as they set off on these next steps in their journey, living Christ's story in the communities they are called to serve."

The candidates, and the parishes in which they will serve, are as follows:

David (Dave) Barf

Dave will serve as Assistant Curate in the Moor and Dale Benefice (the villages of Allerston, Brompton by Sawdon, Ebberston, Ellerburn, Hutton Buscel, Langdale End, Snainton, Thornton Dale, Wilton and Wykeham).

During 30 years serving as a police officer in Humberside and later in North Yorkshire, Dave's faith was rekindled and he began conversations with his local vicar and curate to help discern in what direction God was leading. Following meetings with the York Diocesan Vocations Team Dave studied for three years at St Hild College based in Mirfield, a time he loved and describes as "truly formational".

Retiring from Policing in 2024 Dave now works as volunteer coordinator for a Drug and Alcohol Treatment Charity. He will be supported in his ministry by his wife and two adult children and is looking forward with excitement to taking his next step in ministry.

"I'm glad God knows what the plan is. I'm looking forward to finding out!" he says.

Gill Boag-Munroe

Gill will serve as Assistant Curate in Hinderwell, Roxby and Staithes with Lythe, Ugthorpe and Sandsend, near Whitby.

"Ordination was not something I ever planned," says Gill.

"In fact, I was completely resistant to it. But God always gets his way. I left the church many years ago in protest at some of the things I saw happening which didn't seem to me to fit with the idea I had of being Christlike. When I moved to Hinderwell, I found a church which was so welcoming that I was drawn right back in. And from there to being a Reader. And now ordination!"

Gill has trained for ordination at St Hild college based in Mirfield and says she has loved every minute of the fellowship and study; as a former university lecturer, she relished the study.

"Easter School was a very special source of joy and deep spirituality, in a vibrant community full of fun."

"I shall be serving in my home Benefice along the coast in North Yorkshire, among people I know and love. Perfect."

Anne-Marie Breewood

Anne-Marie will serve as Assistant Curate in the Holme and Seaton Ross Group.

A corporate accountant and Chartered Director, Anne Marie and her husband Tim have lived for 17 years in the community where she will serve. They have a daughter and a grandson.

Brought up in the Roman Catholic Church, Anne Marie was received into the Church of England in 2016 and became a Licensed Lay Minister (or Reader) in 2020.

"During my curacy I would like to bring the same love of God and spiritual riches I have encountered in the Church of England, to the community in my benefice.

"While completing a degree in Theology, Mission and Ministry in York School of Ministry, I felt a strengthening belief that I was being called to ordained ministry.

“The arduous discernment process of the Church and further training at St Hild College based in Mirfield helped to crystallise my calling and all its ramifications.

“I am very excited about the prospect of working as a curate in my benefice.”

Janet Burrows

Janet will serve as Assistant Curate at St Peter’s, Norton (near Malton).

A Christian since my late teens, Janet had always assumed hers would be a behind-the-scenes role so she found the route to ordination a surprising one: “But whenever I’ve doubted, God has made it very clear this is what I’m meant to be doing.”

She was born and grew up in Malton and has lived mostly in Yorkshire, other than moving away for study and work. Most of her career has been in marketing and/or communications, and especially tourism marketing.

Married with two teenage children, Janet has trained for ordination at St Hild College based in Mirfield since 2021 and says she has enjoyed (almost) every minute of it: “I have grown so much through it, and I’ve also discovered a new love of learning.

“I’m really looking forward to what God has in store for me at St Peter’s and in the wider Norton community over the next few years.”

Liz Brown

Liz will serve as assistant Curate at St Francis of Assisi, Ingleby Barwick (Stockton-on-Tees).

Her road to ordination began with a question from her vicar on the 20th April 2023: “Have you ever thought of being a Priest?” Liz’ initial response was laughter; who ever heard of a 73-year-old going for ordination? The vicar replied, “All we can do is push the doors,” so Liz’ journey began.

She trained for ordination at St Hild College, based in Mirfield, from September 2023: “This is a wonderful place which has an ethos of love and care for its students.

“As part of the one year Caleb project it was very intense with discernment and theology running side by side.

“However I had much to gain and nothing to lose. I have received amazing support from my family and friends and my hope for my new ministry would be that I can work alongside my Incumbent to grow our church, serve the parish and be the visible presence of Christ in our community.”

Emma Cain

Emma will serve as Assistant Curate in Yarm with Kirklevington, Picton and Worsall.

Emma moved many years ago to England from Italy to study, met her husband at university and ended up staying. As a Roman Catholic the route to ordination was closed to her, so she served God as a wife and mother and became an active member of my church community.

Emma currently works in Hartlepool with the poorest and most marginalised people in our community.

The call to the priesthood grew too loud to ignore and Emma says God led her to the Anglican Diocese of Durham, who helped discern her vocation.

“I trained for ordination at Lindisfarne College of Theology, where I was nurtured and grew in faith, love and understanding – I could not have asked for a better college and for better fellow pilgrims over the last 4 years.

“God has now led me to the Diocese of York and I am very excited to join you.”

Rosie Evans

Rosie will serve as Assistant Curate in Hornsea, Atwick and Skipsea on the East Riding coast.

Rosie joined her local church’s music group at the age of 13 with her mum and was inspired by the Christ-like love the church family showed to her and to others. At 19, she moved to study modern languages at York University, was drawn into mental health campaigning and began to work for a mental health service and then in Student Life and Wellbeing.

“When I sensed a potential call to ordained ministry, I moved to Austria as a participant on the Ministry Experience Scheme, and for the past three years, have trained for ministry at Cranmer Hall, Durham.

“I’ve enjoyed being challenged academically and formationally; I’m moving to Hornsea with my civil partner Hattie, and my hope is to grow and to encourage others to grow in the Christ-like love my church family showed me.”

Rachel Gavin

Rachel will serve as Assistant Curate at Heworth Holy Trinity and St Wulstan, York.

Raised in the Roman Catholic Church, Rachel returned to faith in her 30's, after an Alpha course, and has spent the last 20 years in Evangelical, Charismatic churches.

"I first felt a call to ordination in 2012, but I ignored it. The call became louder in 2019, then after an accident in 2020, I finally stopped running from it.

Rachel describes the past three years of ordination training at St Hild College based in Mirfield as intense and challenging; "I can't quite believe that I have made it to the other side!"

She works full-time in the National Health Service and plans to continue doing so during her curacy.

"My hope for ministry is to see as many people as possible come to know Jesus as their Lord and Saviour before he returns! I am also passionate about seeing the transformational gifts of the Holy Spirit at work in the church."

Pauline Giddings

Pauline will serve as Assistant Curate at Newby and St Luke's, Scarborough.

Married to James with three children and four grandchildren who are all a constant support to her, Pauline is a retired nurse, currently an exam invigilator and has served in church as a Licenced Lay Minister (or Reader) for three years.

"I finally realised that God has been nagging and nudging me for a long time towards the priesthood. It was impossible to ignore His call on my life, so I decided to listen and follow His plan."

During discernment, Pauline was invited to join the new 'Caleb Stream' one-year training programme at St Hild College based in Mirfield from last September.

"St Hild is a great and supportive place to study and I feel privileged to have been part of a pioneering training in the Northern Province.

“I’m looking forward to expanding my ministry in the community with children and families.”

Helen Jones

Helen will serve as Assistant Curate at Clifton, York.

Brought up a Roman Catholic, Helen began worshipping as an Anglican through a church choir in the city of London in her early 20s, and first experienced a sense of vocation to ministry around the same time. Life’s ups and downs prevented her pursuing this for some years, but during the first Covid lockdown, Helen realised that God wanted something more from her, and started to explore ordained ministry.

Helen has worked in University administration for 20 years, ranging from undergraduate admissions to research support. She has continued to work whilst studying for ordination part-time at St Hild College based in Mirfield: “I am looking forward to pursuing full-time ministry and I’m excited to be going to a curacy in my home city of York.”

Helen is also a classically trained pianist, and teaches a small number of piano students. She also loves cycling, and she and her husband keep guinea pigs.

Debbie Long

Debbie will serve as Assistant Curate in the Derwent Ings group of village churches south-east of York.

From a Christian family and with a background in retail and education, Debbie first felt called to ordination through a powerful experience of the Holy Spirit whilst working as Children and Families co-ordinator at St Paul’s Church in York, but thought that her age was a barrier.

Married to Graham with four children, she trained for ordination as one of eight pioneer students on the ‘Caleb pathway’ of training, formation and discernment for older lay leaders at St Hild College based in Mirfield.

“It has been an absolute blessing and privilege: the Caleb pathway has given me the opportunity to fulfil the call to ordination that I had felt for so long but had thought could never happen – but of course through God all things are possible.

“My grandfather who was a farmer, would have been thrilled that I will be taking part in services which bless the ploughs and pray for a good harvest.”

Hannah Moore

Hannah will serve as Assistant Curate in the Bramham Benefice (Boston Spa, Bramham, Thorp Arch and Walton).

Prior to training for Ordination at Westcott House Hannah read Music at the University of York and enjoyed playing in a brass band and singing in a wide variety of choirs.

"I've always been in and around churches; I grew up singing in a church choir although exploring a call to priesthood still came as a surprise.

"Since then I've spent three years at Westcott and I've had a lot of fun!"

Hannah is looking forward to continuing learning about parish ministry and experiencing the joys and challenges that it brings - and to being back in the north and serving alongside the people of Yorkshire again.

Lizzie Nelson

Lizzie will serve as Assistant Curate in Crayke, Brandsby, Yearsley, Coxwold and Husthwaite.

She grew up in rural West Sussex in the Diocese of Chichester, and is forever grateful to the church community that nurtured her early faith and inspired her to read Theology at university.

Lizzie felt the call to ordained ministry when she moved to North Yorkshire to be closer to family after living in London for 20 years.

"My formation at St Hild College based in Mirfield has been a time of spiritual growth and learning as part of a supportive faith community," she says.

Lizzie will continue with her secular employment, which involves supporting people who are going through change in the business world; she has a particular interest in pastoral ministry and travelling alongside people as they navigate pivotal and everyday events in life.

Leonie (Lennie) Starrs

Lennie will serve as Assistant Curate at Acomb Moor, York.

Lennie always believed in God but at age 13 realised that mere belief wasn't enough; "God wanted a relationship with me and so I gave my life to him.

"I subsequently trained as a nurse but sadly suffered from quite severe health issues which made me unemployed. I have however believed in serving my community in whatever voluntary capacity I am able to."

Lennie has recently moved north from Cornwall: "I am looking forward very much to serving God in this beautiful county.

"I am single but share my life and my home with a beautiful Labradoodle called Poppy."

Lennie trained for ordination with the South-West Ministry Training Course and says she found it a real joy to travel with others along the road, and that can't quite believe that the day is at hand.

"I do not know what God has planned for me, I just know that I am excited to find out."

Claire Stubbs

Claire will serve as Assistant Curate at Bridlington Priory.

While her faith was nurtured in both the Methodist and Anglican Church, Claire's love of Anglican Church Music developed whilst studying for her Education and Music degree at Bishop Grosseteste College, Lincoln in the early 1990s.

Claire sensed around five years ago that change was on the way and over time she acknowledged the possibility that God was calling her into ordained ministry.

"As various 'jigsaw pieces' fell into place I knew it was time to entrust my future to God and follow wherever he was leading."

Claire studied firstly with York School of Ministry and then over three years for a degree in Theology, Ministry and Mission part-time at St Hild College based in Mirfield.

She will continue in her part-time teaching role as Head of Religious Studies at Terrington Hall Prep School near Malton whilst serving as curate at Bridlington Priory.

“I’m very excited about it; I recognise there will be many opportunities and challenges ahead as I seek to live out Christ’s story through my future ministry.”



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